

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

Letter to the Editor:

At the meeting of the Hiwassee City Council on February 3, the amended budget for 2014 & 2015 was presented and noted in the minutes as "first reading."

"Reading" is a bit of a stretch. It was available on a table for anyone who chose to pick up a copy, and I presume it was passed to the council members. There will be a public hearing on February 17 at 2 p.m. A second "reading" will occur at the March meeting of the City Council and it will be approved. The minutes of the Feb. 3 meeting state in the 3rd paragraph of the City of Hiwassee Amended Budget 2014-2015 (Mid-year adjustment) Appropriations Ordinance: "Therefore now, be it ordained by the Mayor and City Council that the 2014-2015 Amended Budget . . . is hereby adopted." It goes on to say that a public hearing will be held at the afore-mentioned date and time. It is adopted and THEN offered to the public?

This begs several questions. If it has already been approved, why hold a public hearing? A public hearing, by definition, is where the public is offered a chance to voice concerns, ask questions and give opinions. If it has already been approved, is this just an exercise in futility? If it is truly to be a PUBLIC hearing, why is it being held on a weekday at two o'clock in the afternoon? Can the working public leave their jobs, shut down their computers and close their offices to attend a meeting? This behavior is not new for City Hall. Their work sessions or "committee meetings" are held the day before the council meetings at 2 p.m., and that's where "deliberate and extensive discussions" of the issues to be presented the following day at the Council Meeting take place. The regular City Council meetings are held at 4 p.m. the following day, and sometimes last as long as twenty minutes, because everything "has been discussed the day before and that saves the Council time." Time for what?

I have been attending one or the other of these meetings, sometimes both, for the past year, and I have yet to hear any extensive deliberations on any subject. There is an extensive monologue by the city manager. There is virtually no discussion.

Sunshine Laws are created for the purpose of making government visible and accessible. I would like for there to be more visibility and accessibility in our city government. I would like for the Council meetings to include things like discussions of what is going to be voted on. I would like to hear more from Council members.

Not all meetings choose to follow the exact Robert's Rules of Order. Organizations are allowed to adopt their own procedures as long as they follow some basic order and are consistent. Given that, I suppose the City government is nominally operating within the boundaries of the law. But, is the Council really serving the community it purportedly represents? I don't think so. Two o'clock in the afternoon is not good for working people. Four o'clock is not any better. They need to consider the constraints and convenience of their constituents. Although they are technically NOT violating the Sunshine Laws; they are certainly making it difficult for citizens to attend meetings and/or hearings. Why?

Anne Mitchell



**RARE KIDS;
WELL DONE**
By Don Jacobsen

Q: Dr. Don, I have a bright 4 1/2 year old boy who is ruining my life. He is defiant, talks back, hits me and other kids at school, and drives his teacher to the edge. When I ask him to do something he shouts No, then tells me I'm the worst mom of all. If I try to talk to him about this behavior he blows up and walks away. I never know when his tantrums will come. He has about convinced me that the situation is hopeless.

A: He is indeed a bright four-year old. The reason I know that is because the behaviors you describe are learned behaviors. He has figured out how to control his world and the people in it. Maybe hold them hostage is more accurate. He has learned how to get his own way and not have to pay a price for it. Grandma would have said, "If he does something bad he should be made to feel bad about it." He's about to learn what she meant.

I encourage you to administer a huge dose of reality. It's time for your "There's a new sheriff in town" speech. I suggest you go somewhere that he can't "walk away." Like to this bedroom, where you sit on a chair that is propped against the door. Explain that you are going to tell him something that will change his life. From this day on things will be forever different. This will not be a gradual process, it begins right now. Hold up a calendar where you have circled the date. This event is an expression of authority that he needs to understand. It is not open for discussion; it is the new rule in our family.

Tell him that beginning today he will begin to learn

the meaning of two words: Respect and obedience. (Incidentally, those are the only two commands given in the Bible directly to children, that they are to respect their parents and obey them.) Assure him that as his mom it is your duty to see that he learns these two principles, and you have developed some tools that will help him.

Begin with the three behaviors that you find the most offensive. When he forgets and violates any one of them he spends the rest of the day in his room (that has been stripped of its recreational properties, toys, etc.), coming out only for meals, bathroom, chores, and to go somewhere with you. (He is four so he has chores, right?) You are instructing his teacher that if he disobeys or hits another student she is to phone you and you will bring him home immediately where he will spend the rest of the day in his room. No time off for good behavior, for tears, or for promises. To his comment that you are the world's worst mom a good response is simply, "If I was your age I might feel the same way." When you feel that the first three behaviors are under control, move to three others. Generally the first three will also solve some that weren't even on your list.

Don't be flexible with this strategy, mom. He is used to driving and will do his best to take the keys back. Don't allow it. Give him a hug and leave him standing there with his mouth open. It's called Leadership Parenting and you're going to like it, even if he doesn't.

Send your parenting questions to: DrDon@RareKids.net.

Deal Proclamation promotes healthy forest fire

In a proclamation last week, Governor Nathan Deal helped raise awareness about the importance of fire to healthy forests by proclaiming February 2-8, 2015, "Prescribed Fire Awareness Week." "Prescribed burning of Georgia forest lands is a valuable tool for protecting the forest from devastating wildfires and managing valuable wildlife species," states the proclamation, signed February 4 at the State Capitol. The document notes that professional foresters and other land resource managers use prescribed burning for improving forest health, reducing hazardous fuels and enhancing reforestation. Prescribed fire reduces hazardous timber on the forest floor that can fuel wildfires and threaten homes and property.

Prescribed Fire Awareness Week was established in 2005 through the efforts of the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) and the Georgia Prescribed Fire Council. It is observed annually during the first full week in February as a time to recognize this safe way to apply a natural process, ensure ecosystem health and reduce wildfire risk. Healthy forests provide clean air and water, and diverse wildlife populations for Georgia's residents and visitors. Prescribed burning means the controlled application of fire to existing vegetative fuels under specific environmental conditions and following appropriate precautionary measures, which causes the fire to be confined to a pre-determined area and accomplishes one or more planned land management objectives, or to mitigate catastrophic wildfires.

Prescribed fire has many benefits, including helping our forest wildlife by removing brush, briars, and undesirable vegetation that they can't eat and creating an open forest floor where grasses and small plants can grow for them. Prescribed fire also helps reduce the threat of insects and diseases in the trees.

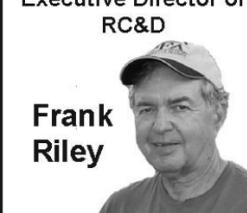
All of these effects of prescribed fire will improve the health of our forests, wildlife, and reduce the chance of losing the trees and property to an uncontrolled fire. Prescribed fire is a safe way to apply a natural process, ensure ecosystem health and reduce wildfire risk. On average, Georgia prescribe fires burn about 1.5 million acres of forest lands each year, and is one of the most environmentally and economically feasible methods for managing the state's valuable forest resources. As a land management tool, prescribed fire is essential for managing wildlife species such as bobwhite quail, eastern wild turkey, white-tailed deer, many songbirds, the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker and many other fire-dependent species. Prescribed burning is the only known forest management method which perpetuates the longleaf/wiregrass ecosystem, Georgia's most diverse flora and fauna ecosystem.

Frequent fires, set by lightning strikes and Native

GUEST COLUMNS

From time to time, people in the community have a grand slant on an issue that would make a great guest editorial. Those who feel they have an issue of great importance should call our editor and talk with him about the idea. Others have a strong opinion after reading one of the many columns that appear throughout the paper. If so, please write. Please remember that publication of submitted editorials is not guaranteed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE EMAILED OR MAILED TO: Towns County Herald, Letter to the Editor, PO Box 365, Hiwassee, GA 30546. Our email address: tcherald@windstream.net. Letters should be limited to 200 words or less, signed, dated and include a phone number for verification purposes. This paper reserves the right to edit letters to conform with Editorial page policy or refuse to print letters deemed pointless, potentially defamatory or in poor taste. Letters should address issues of general interest, such as politics, the community, environment, school issues, etc. Letters opposing the views of previous comments are welcomed; however, letters cannot be directed at, nor name or ridicule previous writers. Letters that recognize good deeds of others will be considered for publication.*
Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.

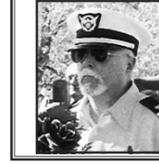


Executive Director of RC&D
Frank Riley

Americans, have shaped Georgia's ecosystems for thousands of years. Our forest ecosystems evolved with fire and continue to need the strategic application of fire that mimics this natural cycle. The plants and animals of the pine woods are accustomed to frequent fires and depend on these fires for their survival. Fire is as natural as sunshine, rain and wind in many plant communities including upland pine, pine Flatwoods, marshes and wet prairies. Fire also benefits many of the rare animal species in our state that are declining. Some of these declines are caused almost totally by fire exclusion.

Great care is taken by prescribed fire managers to minimize any temporary inconveniences created by smoke. Smoke management plans for prescribed burns are designed so that smoke-sensitive areas like roads and residences, etc. are not negatively affected by the burn. Smoke from prescribed fires does not contribute appreciably to air quality issues since the practice typically avoids times of stagnant summer air. However, uncontrolled wildfires usually occur during the summer when there is already a bad urban air quality problem. We can reduce the risk of wildfires and the resulting smoke or air quality problems with well-timed prescribed fires.

For more information on prescribed fire and the benefits of fire, go to www.gatrees.org or contact your local GFC office, Chestatee@ChattahoocheeRC&D www.frank.crcrd@gmail.com or visit the Georgia Prescribed Fire council www.garxfire.com.



The Veterans' Corner

By **Scott Drummond,**
USCG Veteran

We must never forget those who provided freedom

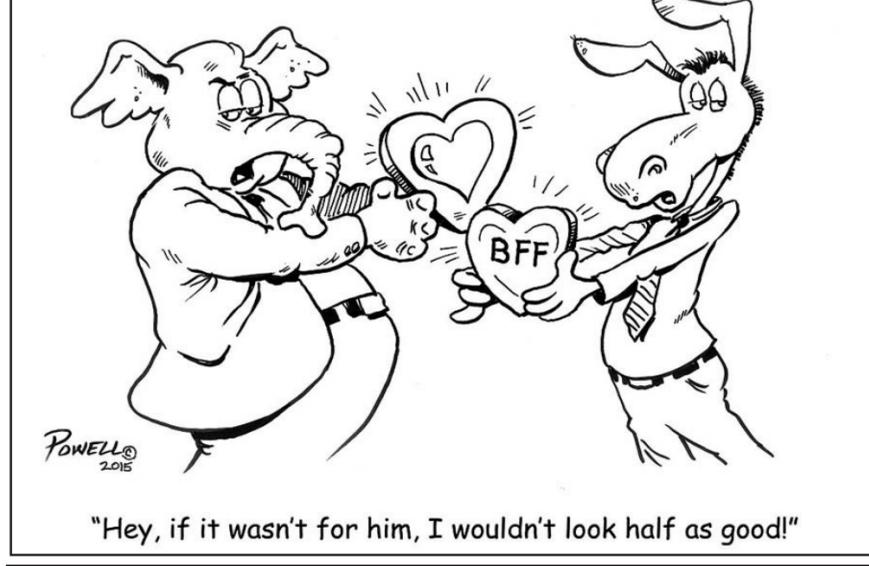
The Battle of Iwo Jima, 19 February to 26 March 1945 was key to America winning our efforts against Japanese aggression in WWII. We, in Towns County, have lots of older heroes who could mentor us all, in the realities of life and like all of our veterans, are owed a debt of gratitude for our blessings. Amongst those is a fine, very funny, outgoing and warm individual, known by many, Mr. Todd Kimsey. A local son of our mountain region born January 15, 1926. Always fascinated with two endeavors since childhood, joining our U.S. Navy and education. Very accomplished at both!

After high school, Todd attended Berry College for a short while then got his dad's permission to enlist in the Navy in September 1943. The "coldest he's ever been" was boot camp in the Great Lakes. After Advanced Training at Fort Lauderdale, FL, he was assigned to our USS Pasadena, a Light Cruiser, and enjoyed some fun filled pleasure cruises through serious storms (typhoons) in the Pacific, en route to do his part in our effort around Iwo Jima as an FCO3C, aiming and assisting in firing those many mounted guns aboard his light cruiser. His modern counterpart would be a fire control technician, however Todd had to know a lot of today's computer assisted systems math, and range estimation in his head, disciplined to think through the stress of oncoming assaults from Japanese fire and air assaults. Not an uncomplicated task, requiring knowledge of math, geometry,

physics and ballistics, and no dawdling around while setting the courses of those munitions, meant to protect our Marines and to neutralize the many Japanese who had dug in to many caves and tunnels on the island of Iwo Jima. He and his brothers aboard the Pasadena also were tasked with trying to control the many air attacks and Kamikazes from determined and psychopathic Japanese air assaults.

Todd left the Navy on April 2, 1946 and married his sweetheart, Hellen (two Ls) on April 3, 1947 at her tender age of 17. She was quick to tell me that she knew he was "THE ONE" when she saw him in his dress white Navy uniform, just prior to his leaving the Navy. Married for 68 years, with their lifetime of community service being here, primarily in Towns County, they have a beautiful, warm and welcoming Christian home in Young Harris.

Hellen and Todd both taught at Towns County High School, then went on to teach at Young Harris College, with Todd doing a little football and basketball coaching along the way. He was also a superb athlete. Todd finally retired, 37 years of teaching, and now has his "fulltime boss" Hellen directing his daily activities, in and around their wonderful, fun and All American home. They have a daughter, Ann and two grown grand boys, Kevin and Keith of Blairsville. Todd reminded me that "he had no idea how his life would've turned out had he not enlisted in the Navy." Not as successful he implied. (And he would've missed out on Hellen!)



Community Calendar

American Legion Post 23 meets 1st Tuesday of each month at 4 PM at VFW Post 7807, Sunnyside Rd., Hiwassee. Call 706-896-8387 for details. We need your support!
Towns County Water Board Meeting 3rd Monday of each month at 6 p.m. in the TC Water Office Building.
Mountain Community Seniors meet the second Thursday of each month at the Senior Center in Hiwassee at 1 p.m.
Towns County Republican Party meets at 6:30 PM the 4th Thursday of each month at the new Senior Center. For more info call 706-994-3919.
Democratic Party of Towns County meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 5 PM at the new Senior Center.
Towns County Planning Commission is held the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Courthouse.
Towns County Commissioners meeting is the 3rd Thursday at 5:30 p.m. in the courthouse.
School Board Meeting, 2nd Monday each month at 7 p.m. in the auditorium.
Hiwassee City Council 1st Tuesday of month 4 p.m., at City Hall.
Young Harris City Council, 1st Tuesday of month at 7 p.m., Young Harris City Hall.
The Unicorn Masonic Lodge #259 meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.
Stevens Lodge #414 F & AM meets the 1st Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM in Young Harris. Sat. morning breakfast 2nd Sat. of each month from 8 - 10:30 AM. \$6 adults, \$3 12 & under.
Towns County Board of Elections holds its monthly meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m. at the Elections Office (Old Rock Jail).
Towns County Historical Society meets the 2nd Monday of each month at the old Rec Center in Hiwassee at 5:30 p.m. 706-896-1060, www.townshistory.org
Bridge Players intermediate level meets at 12:30 p.m. on Mondays &

Fridays at the Towns County Rec Center.
Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, Inc (MRACG) meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at Daniel's Steakhouse, Hiwassee. The Board meets at 4 p.m., and the Guild at 6. Call us 706-896-0932.
Mountain Computer User Group meets the 2nd Monday of each month. Meetings start at 6 p.m. and visitors are welcome. Details can be found at www.mcutg.org.
Chattahoochee-Nantahala Chapter, Trout Unlimited meets 2nd Thursday of each month at Cadence Bank in Blairsville. 5 p.m. Fly Tying - 7 p.m. General Meeting. Everyone welcome. www.ngatu692.com.
Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) meets the 3rd Monday of each month at various area restaurants. For information call John at 706-896-2430 or visit www.moaa.org/chapter/blueridgemountains.
Alcoholics Anonymous: 24 hour phone line 828-837-4440.
Mothers of Preschoolers meets the third Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church of Blairsville from 6 - 8 p.m. Call the church at 706-745-2469.
Chattahoochee Regional Hospital Auxiliary on the 3rd Monday of each month, except the months of July, October and December, in the hospital cafeteria at 1:30 p.m.
Mountain Magic Table Tennis Club meets 3 p.m. Thursdays at Pine Log Baptist Church Fellowship Hall in Brasstown. Ping Pong players welcome. Call Jerry (828) 837-7658.
The Humane Society Mountain Shelter Board of Directors meets the last Thursday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at Cadence Bank in Blairsville.
The Towns County Alzheimer's Support Group meets the first Tuesday of each month at 1:30 PM in the Family Life Center of McConnell Memorial Baptist Church. For more info call Carol at 706-896-6407.
The Appalachian Shrine Club meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM at the Allegheny Lodge in Blairsville. For more info

call William 706-994-6177.
GMREC Garden Tours every Monday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Shooting Creek Basket Weavers meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. at the Shooting Creek Fire Hall Community Center. For more info www.shootingcreek-basketweavers.com.
Friendship Community Club meets the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6 PM at Clubhouse, 1625 Hwy. 76, 706-896-3637.
Goldwing Road Riders meets the 3rd Saturday of each month at Daniel's Steakhouse in Hiwassee. We eat at 11 and meeting begins at 12.
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meets every Wednesday evening at 7 PM at the Red Cross building on Jack Dayton Circle.
Caregiver support group meets 2nd Tuesday of each month, 3 p.m. at Brasstown Manor, located at 108 Church St., Hiwassee. Call 706-896-4285 for more info.
Enchanted Valley Square Dance Club. Dances 2nd & 4th Fridays at Towns Co. Rec. Ctr. from 7-9 PM. \$5/person to dance. Free to watch.
Brasstown Woodturners Guild meets 1st Saturday of month at 9:30 AM in HHS shop. For more info call J. C. at 706-896-5711.
Mountain Amateur Radio Club (MARC) meets 6:30 PM the 1st Monday of month at 1298 Jack Dayton Cir. (next to EMS), Hiwassee. For info call Al 706-896-9614 after 6 PM.
The Board of the Towns County Chamber of Commerce meet the second Monday of every month at 8 a.m. at the Chamber office, 1411 Jack Dayton Circle, Young Harris.
The Quilting Bee at McConnell Memorial Baptist Church in Family Life Center, Room 216. 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month from 10 AM - 3 PM. Bring a sack lunch. For more information call Kathy at 706-835-6721 or Marilyn at 706-897-4367.
Mountain Coin Club meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the North Georgia Tech campus in Blairsville. Guests are welcome. For more info, call 706-379-1488.

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Dedicated to the promotion of Towns County

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